

Wednesday, in a heavy rain, I left for the States. I called off other engagements — at Brockport, N. Y., and Cleveland, Ohio. This time I imposed myself upon the kindness of my friends Jane and Frank Giori. It was from their home in Grand Island that we mailed out our new book to the subscribers who probably had given up hope of ever getting it.

My brother Kazy, who is stationed near Geneva, N. Y., drove in on Thursday to Grand Island to see me. The day was sunny and we went riding around Niagara Falls, etc. It was good to see him.

I kept my Buffalo dates, tho I took it very easy and did not take part in any "extra entertainments." Meanwhile a new sickness was getting a hold of me — an "after effect." I developed neuritis from my hips down. The attack used to get hold of me only as I went to sleep. I suffered six painful and sleepless nights with the sixth night being the type of "the last straw that broke the camel's back." I was rushing to get south. I was determined that I must get warmth and sunshine if I were to survive at all.

Delaware, Ohio — Sunshine at Last!

We found Delaware, Ohio, the home of Ohio Wesleyan University and the Cooperative Recreation Service, enjoying a record heat of 88 degrees. For the first time since Stockton, Calif. last August was I able to wear a T-shirt and tan myself in the sun. Spring was well advanced. The fruit trees were ending their bloom. The lilacs and other flowering bushes and flowers gave delight to the eye and joy to the heart. They were days I almost gave up hope of ever enjoying again. God has put up with all my foolishness and through His great mercy I saw spring and life again. For the following two nights I slept in stretches of twelve hours at a time!

In the outskirts of Delaware is where Lynn Rohrbough runs his Cooperative Recreation Service, known for their Handy booklets, folk songs and folk game supplies for any recreational group and "Y's" anywhere. The location is lovely. The place is beautifully equipped with modern printing accessories while the Rohrboughs and their staff are exceptionally well versed in their subject. It amazed me.

The Rohrboughs were preparing at that time a new booklet of mine which is to contain Lithuanian folk songs, legends, table and out door games, play party and folk dances. One evening they had a group of thirty from the university, all of whom with the exception of Vytautas Sliupas, a Chicago friend, were Yankee Americans, and they were singing the Lithuanian folk songs in English. It made me feel proud. Soon the Lithuanian "Daina" will be sung by a great number of American youth. The Rohrboughs, through their recreation service, are excellent spreaders of this form of recreation.

ANOTHER TRY IN PENNSY

After a week's rest in Ohio, I thought I was ready to try a little teaching and we left for our next destination, Pittsburgh, Pa., where I was scheduled with YWCA and with St. Francis Academy. This time new ailments started troubling me — stomach difficulties. The teaching was very taxing. The good Sisters had the Academy cut the teaching time and had me rest in the Rectory. After two days in Pittsburgh, we rushed up for two sessions at State College, Pa., an afternoon at the College itself and in the evening a rather interesting lecture demonstration for the Hillel Foundation — that happened to be (then unknown to me) my last dancing. From State College we left for Brockport, N. Y., a State Teachers' College, and filled another engagement — under trying health conditions.

ARDEN, DELAWARE. TRAGEDIES AND TROUBLES

We hurried South, away from the North which seemed to refuse to grow warm. We came to Arden, where the Earl Brooks family parents of my companion

Bill, live. We found the town bedecked in white — the abundance of dogwood trees all in full blossom, was fascinating.

As I entered the house, Mrs. Brooks greeted me: "Vyts, my parents were killed the day before yesterday." The words "my parents were killed", a statement I use when responding to inquiries regarding my parents, seemed to have knocked me off my feet, and opened wounds anew. As Edith was describing the tragedy, I tried to compare the circumstances. Mrs. Brooks' folks died instantly and in a state of happiness. They were on their way to see their other daughter and her husband off to Germany. They saw the train come, thinking it was theirs and would therefore stop to take them on, went across the tracks to the platform. But it was not their train but a through train speeding at 70 m.p.h. 53 years of a happy wedded life terminated. But my parents saw the Nazi murderer come at them, march them for three miles to their death place where they were slain. The following day (May 13) was Mother's Day. All of that heightened my mental depression.

I still conducted two classes, my last classes, one at the International Institute in Philadelphia and one in Arden. Meanwhile I was undergoing clinical tests in Wilmington, Del. The findings frightened the doctor — infected kidney, diabetes, the glands failing to produce hydrochloric acid, and cancer. All further work was prohibited and I was transferred to Philadelphia to the care of Dr. Baldwin.

THE END OF THE DANCE TRAIL

FOR SOME TIME TO COME —

Until hospitalization I stayed with the William Hargraves. If anybody deserves the title of "good Samaritans", they merit first place. Comparatively I am a stranger to them, but their hospitality and goodness is limitless and beyond call of duty. Gerda Hargrave reminded me of Camilla (Mrs. Leslie) Bonnell of Fairhope, Ala., who under similar circumstances took over the task of looking after me.

I was hospitalized at the Philadelphia Osteopathic Hospital in order to complete the study and they reached the conclusion that my main trouble was a serious flare-up of T. B. and a very long period of hospitalization is ahead of me.

This would have been one of the most wonderful summers of my entire life — a wonderful schedule and exciting plans. Everything crashed right out of my hands, I thought a lot and cried a lot. Here I am, stranded and penniless. God punished me with one hand but shed his blessing on me with the other. The blessings are my true friends. All rallied. Gerda Hargrave set aside all her obligations to everything else and concentrated on my needs. Frank Kaltman called all my friends in the States to inform them. He started the wheels rolling. I was unable to attend the teaching sessions planned by the Philadelphia Play Co-op at the Lansdowne Methodist Church and Gerda Hargrave did it for me. Last minute benefit dances were sponsored at Swarthmore College, at the Philadelphia YM-YWCA, in New York City and other places.

Here is my tale, one of grief and disappointments. However, my faith in the mercies of God is undiminished. Out of my dark depths I call unto Him again. Lord have mercy on me — a poor sinner.

Before closing I wish to express my thanks to Bill Brooks for his comradeship and unbending faithfulness and great consideration. To the Hargraves and the Kaltmans I fear that, no matter what I'll say or in how many pages it will be said, their devotion is beyond words. Lord! Safeguard them, their families, and all my friends from all ill.

Pease pray for me.

"TLAFAD"

A folk dance made up by: BILL BROOKS

Well, here it is! TLAFAAD, or "The Latest Authentic Folk Art Dance." abbreviated. Get it! Pretty cute, eh? I don't know what authentic means, but at least its inclusion makes the name pronounceable. I hesitated to present this new dance as there is already so much good material released that it seems redundant to add my contribution, but there's always room for one more good number, so enough of defeatism and on with the dance.

The traditional music for the dance is "Aba Daba Honeymoon." I am planning a release, on my own label, especially for this dance. It will be a good record with myself on the vocal, accompanied by my own washboard band. This record is still in the planning stage, however so you avid dancers who can't wait had better pick up some commercial release of the same tune to use as a makeshift.

Before we go any further with a description of the dance, I have a confession to make. Actually, although the over-all conception and basic style of the dance are original, some of the patterns are based on older dance forms. What I have cleverly done is to amalgamate some of the better steps from some old-timey, dated dances, into a new harmonious blend. Of course, in the process of creation, some natural and necessary basic changes were made, so on first walk through it would seem that things are rather hashed up. Patient study on the part of the dancer, however, should convince him or her that these improvements and changes are for the best, and that they tend to beautify and refine the older art forms.

The theme of TLAFAAD is that the boy takes the part of the "chimp", and the girl, that of the "monk". Observe how well these roles tie in with the words of the song. This donning of roles should not be carried too far, don't overplay, let good taste be the criterion.

The 1st and easiest step is based on a simple schot'e with the innovation that the couple starts with the inside feet and moves backwards. This step is to be done over and over until tired, at which time the couple quietly stands on the sidelines waiting for the other couples to tire, or until the strain of music indicates that the second step is on its way. It was originally planned that the first step would last through one complete play-through of the record. If this seems to be too long, though I don't see why it should, the leader can vary the time at his own discretion.

The second step should start exactly with the first note of the introduction. This of course explains some comments in the previous paragraph. If your record has no introduction I suggest that you eliminate this figure from the dance entirely. This step is rather subtle and has to be seen to be appreciated. I strongly recommend that no group do this step unless someone has done, or seen this step. Roughly, it is based on the Ozark square someone in the group has done, or at least seen this step done. Houghly, it is based on the Ozark square dance shuffle step (not to be confused with the Ozark clog step) but it also contains elements of the Lithuanian or Polish type of polka. Thus it becomes - shuffle, bounce; shuffle, bounce; and a fast shuffle, hop, bounce. Actually this step is not as difficult as it appears on paper. For ease of teaching it makes no difference which foot either partner starts out on, as long as they both end up on the right foot. This is absolutely necessary because the next step can not be done correctly unless both parties are free to start on their left feet.

Beginners have an especially hard time with this next step. They seem to want to do it the old fashioned way and can't remember to take five steps for four beats of the music. At this point the dancer will do well to remember that patience and fortitude will generally win out in the end.

The third step is done as follows; with the onset of the twentieth measure on the second time through, the dancers should join hands and form themselves into little circles, with one couple to a circle. In this position they are ready to do a regular square dance buzz step with the right foot as the pivot, but in a COUNTER-CLOCKWISE direction. Thats right; backwards. It's tricky, but lots of fun when you catch on to it. Since one has to take five steps for four beats of music, the tendency is to feel hurried, thus making the step look awkward and jerky. Needless to say, this is not the right way to do the step.

When the leader sees that the dancers are getting dizzy, he should give the signal to stop, whereupon all drop hands and mill about clapping hands and stamping feet in time with the music. This last part is usually the best part of the dance. As it gives all of the dancers a chance to improvise and try out new steps: sort of a "Jam Session."



Hornburg-Mahony

Lew Mahony, known to many VILTIS readers, will be wed on August 18th in Oconomowoc, Wis., home of the bride, sweet and charming Shirley Hornburg.

Lew is an old time folk dancer, having danced with the Dudes and Dames of Denver U. (Colorado) and when in Chicago he belonged to the Northwestern Polish Dance Group and the International House (U. of Chicago) Folk Dancers. At present he is the moving spirit of the folk dancers in Rochester, N. Y. Our best wishes to you for a long life of wedded bliss.



DONALD BRUCE GEIGER

The many campers who attended the Stockton, Calif. folk dance camps will find of interest the news item that Leslie and Lotte Geiger who honeymooned at last year's camp are proud parents this year of a big boy (7 lb. 14 oz.) Donald Bruce, who increased Stockton's population on April 21. To Leslie and Lotte our sincerest congratulations.

THE "POETIC" APPROACH IN CHOREOGRAPHY

One of the Square Dance Mags carried a description for a latest creation set (for the 'umphieth time) to the "Third Man Theme" record. We would like to reprint one paragraph which we think is a honey.

"On 'and', count 8, execute a quick little hop on inside foot (making an intriguing swishing sound on the floor) as the outside foot is arched, toe pointing downward, as if to test the water before 'stepping in'."